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SUBJECT: UNGA THIRD COMMITTEE TAKES ACTION ON PROGRAMME 19,  
CONCLUDES WORK

¶1. On November 26, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Third Committee passed draft decision A/C.3/63/L.79, entitled "Programme planning," in a vote of 167 in favor, two against (U.S.), and two abstentions. The Committee Chair was the initial sponsor of the draft, but withdrew it after the Israeli delegation expressed its concerns regarding the draft's provision calling upon the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to follow up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. The Mauritanian delegation, on behalf of the African Group, resubmitted the draft, with 34 other delegations adding their co-sponsorship. The United States proposed an oral amendment replacing the reference in paragraph 19.11(d) to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action with a broader reference to all relevant UN conferences and summits. The Egyptian delegate engaged in a procedural battle with the Committee Chair, resulting in a motion by the delegate to appeal the Chair's decision to follow Committee precedent and allow amendments submitted with less than 24-hours advanced notice to be considered. The Committee sided with the Chair in a vote of 74 in favor (U.S.), 57 against, and 24 abstentions. The Committee then rejected the United States' proposed oral amendment in a vote of 105 against, four in favor (U.S.), and 55 abstentions.

¶2. Following the adoption of A/C.3/63/L.79, delegates from Australia and Canada delivered Explanations of Vote (EOVs) explaining that although they strongly supported the work of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, they had abstained on the draft because of their concerns regarding the Durban Review Conference. The United States and Israel gave EOVs, noting that they had voted against the draft because of concerns with the Durban Review Conference, particularly the Conference's persistence in unfairly singling out Israel. The complete text of the U.S. EOV (and all other U.S. statements) can be found at [www.usunnewyork.usmission.gov](http://www.usunnewyork.usmission.gov). Several other delegations noted their disappointment that the Committee had been unable to achieve consensus on the draft decision. The delegate from South Africa concluded that it would have been "inconceivable" to have adopted a text without a reference to the Durban Review Conference.

¶3. The Committee also adopted by consensus draft resolution L.76, entitled "Tentative programme of work of the Third Committee for the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, submitted by the Chairman of the Committee," thus concluding its work for the 63rd UNGA.  
Wolff